



Across the Green
September 2016

TO: University of Vermont Academic Community
FROM: David V. Rosowsky, Provost and Senior Vice President

“(UVM)2020 Vision”

INTRODUCTION

Welcome back to campus and to the new academic year! As a native New Englander, I am always excited by the arrival of fall. As much as I love the colors, the crisp nights, fall sports, and the chance to wear flannel and fleece, I most look forward to the apples. To those who are new to our community and come from outside the northeast, you are in for a sensory treat – the sights, smells, and tastes of fall in Vermont.

As we say goodbye to the summer and hello to my favorite season, we also welcome close to 3,000 new undergraduate and graduate students to the University. The [Class of 2020](#) is the highest achieving, most academically talented, and engaged class in UVM’s history. This year’s Move-In Weekend, Convocation and Twilight Ceremonies, and Week of Welcome did not disappoint. I hope you had a chance to participate, meet our new students, and share in the excitement of the start of the new academic year.

I know many of you have read (or are reading) this year’s UVM first-year reading selection, *The Sixth Extinction* by Elizabeth Kolbert. I applaud the first-year reading selection committee for its outstanding choice. In my [remarks](#) at Convocation, I encouraged our students to finish reading this book (if they have not done so already) so that they can participate fully in the classroom and campus-wide activities designed around it. I encourage you to do the same, so that you, too, can participate fully in the exploration, learning, and discovery that will take place on our campus this year. As has become customary, I have posted an [essay](#) on my webpage that offers reflections on the book as well as suggestions for how students and faculty can incorporate *The Sixth Extinction* into their own journeys of learning and discovery this year, and how we – as faculty – can use the book to guide classroom learning, discussion and deeper study.

This is an exciting time for the University of Vermont, not only the start of a new academic year but a dynamic and forward-looking time in the University's rich history. A time of renewal of people, programs, and places – but also investments in our faculty and staff, support services for our students, and both our research and our innovation enterprises. I am pleased to provide some updates on both progress and plans in this memo, as well as links for more information.

FACULTY AFFAIRS, UVM'S TEACHER-SCHOLAR MODEL

The end of August saw a very successful New Faculty Orientation, with 65 new faculty participating in the two-day event. The orientation overlapped with our first-ever campus-wide Faculty Conference attracting more than 150 returning faculty. Following a shared morning session, faculty were able to select from nine break-out discussions on topics ranging from effective teaching and innovative pedagogies to high impact practices for student engagement and success. Campus feedback, both formally through a survey and informally through comments received in the days that followed, suggest the event was very well received and that faculty hope this can become an annual event. I want to recognize and thank Dr. Jim Vigoreaux, Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs, and the Faculty Senate for planning and organizing a very successful first Faculty Conference.

These events were followed by a training workshop for new department chairs and associate deans. Upcoming events this fall include Faculty Development Day (October 10), presented jointly by the Office of the Provost, HRDMA, and the Faculty Senate; the Mental Health Matters Conference (with the Center for Health and Wellbeing); and a faculty mentoring training program. The Associate Provost's [webpage](#) has additional information on all of our ongoing and planned faculty development programs.

At this year's Senior Leadership Retreat, a focus was placed on UVM's *Teacher-Scholar model* – what it means for our faculty and our students, how it serves as a discriminator for the University, how we can advance and promote the model, and how we can enable and recognize the many great teacher-scholars among our faculty. Few universities can boast a stronger, more authentic commitment to the *Teacher-Scholar model* than UVM. This is something that we cherish, nurture, and celebrate every day. As I have shared with various audiences already this fall, we will continue to focus on the importance of the *Teacher-Scholar model* at UVM and elevating its visibility. I look forward to engaging the academic leadership and the faculty in these discussions over the course of the year.

RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP

The University continues to invest strategically in research, both in supporting established programs and seeding new initiatives. The latter is aimed largely (though not exclusively) at creating new research collaborations across disciplines. The Vice President for Research maintains a webpage with complete information about the various funding programs, including application process, selection criteria, and recent awards.

All together, the Office of the Provost and the Office of the Vice President for Research allocate more than \$1M annually to faculty for research and scholarly activity. This includes support through the SPARK-VT program; the REACH program; the Faculty Activity Network (FAN); the UVM-Industry Fellowship Program; the Fostering Interdisciplinary Scholarship, Arts, and Research (FISAR) program; the OVPR Express program (for new faculty); as well as some direct financial support (cost-share, equipment, or matching funds) for large center-level grants identified by the Vice President for Research as strategic priorities for the University.

Our plan is to steadily increase the amount of funds being allocated to faculty for research and scholarship through these and other programs over the next 3-4 years, both through increases in the OVPR's investment fund (included as part of the new budget model) and the availability of new research initiation funds awarded through the Institute for Environment. Growth in extramural research and increased interdisciplinary activity are two of the [Academic Excellence Goals](#) underpinning the President's [Strategic Action Plan](#).

In recent months, a large number of new research grants have been awarded to our faculty. An increasing number of these grants have been significant in size and often highly interdisciplinary, involving investigators and supporting students from multiple colleges and schools. In the last six months, a total of 22 new research grants of \$1M or more were awarded to UVM faculty. Examples include (PI's listed alphabetically by last name):

Mads Almassalkhi (CEMS), Packetized Energy Management: Coordinating Transmission and Distribution, DOE, \$1.7M

Hugh Patrick Garavan (COM), Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development (ABCT-VT), NIH, \$1.7M

Charles Irvin (COM), ALA-Asthma Clinical Research Cente (CORE Award), American Lung Association, \$2.5M

Michael Lewis (COM), Vitamin D to Prevent Type 2 Diabetes, NIH, \$4M

Benjamin Littenberg, (COM), Integrating Behavioral Health and Primary Care for Comorbid Behavioral and Medical Problems, PCORI, \$18.5M

Julia Smith (CALS), Human Behavioral Approach to Reducing the Impact of Livestock Pest or Disease Incursions of Socio-Economic Importance, USDA, \$3M

Lori Stevens (CAS), Modeling Disease Transmission Using Spatial Mapping of Vector-Parasite Genetics and Vector Feeding Patterns, NSF, \$2.5M

Judith Van Houten (EPSCoR), Lake Champlain Basin Resilience to Extreme Events, NSF, \$4M

Judith Van Houten (EPSCoR), Vermont Genetics Network-Vermont INBRE, NIH, \$7.4M

Eva Wollenberg (RSENR), CGIAR Research Program: Climate Change, Agriculture, and Food Security, CIAT (International Center for Tropical Agriculture), \$2.4M

Congratulations to these investigators, their co-investigators, and all those involved in successful grant applications. UVM's research enterprise continues to increase in size and scope, engaging more faculty members, garnering more extramural support, creating more opportunities for our students, and gaining national and international attention for outcomes.

Recall that last year, the faculty in each college or school developed a list of [Scholarly Productivity and Impact Metrics](#) to plan, guide, and track their progress toward their own goals

for growth in research and scholarship. Each college and school includes extramural support for research as one of its key indicators.

INSTITUTE FOR ENVIRONMENT

The creation of a university-wide institute on the environment was identified more than four years ago by the faculty as a strategic high priority. Since that time there have been several faculty task committees charged with furthering this ambitious concept through the creation of a mission and vision, a governance structure, and a resourcing plan. Plans have evolved over the last three years and have been reported regularly to the campus.

As you have been hearing, we are now at the point of moving the establishment of the Institute through formal governance channels. There is great anticipation and optimism around the launch of the Institute, after years of careful and thoughtful planning, and I am grateful to the many faculty and campus leaders who have helped bring us to this point. I especially want to thank Dr. Taylor Ricketts for his leadership in helping guide the institute's development.

I invite you to learn more about the [Institute](#) and its exciting and ambitious agenda and goals. The website – created several years ago and updated regularly – provides a history of the Institute's development, links to all task committee reports as well as campus communications and updates, an executive summary, and FAQ's. I hope to have more news to share in the weeks and months ahead.

STUDENT SUCCESS INITIATIVES

Under the leadership of Dr. Annie Stevens, Vice Provost for Student Affairs, we continue to make progress in a number of important areas for the University and our students. The new [first-year residence hall](#) being constructed on central campus is on-target for opening fall 2017, less than one year from now. This entire project, a re-imagining of the first-year residential experience, is designed around supporting our students as they transition to university life and helping them to establish living/learning patterns for success. The new residence hall complex will become the new home for the [Wellness Environment](#) program. Additional highlights include a fitness center, bicycle storage, seminar rooms, an enclosed bridge to Bailey/Howe Library, and a 450-seat dining hall with an open kitchen concept and eight distinct food venues.

Over the summer, you may have noticed a number of student services offices relocated. This was done to co-locate similar service centers, relocate the Career Center to the Davis Center, make room for the new [Advising Center](#), and provide new space for the ALANA Student Center (which will be moving this fall to the Living/Learning E Building). The Davis Center is now the home to (1) the [Career Center](#), (2) the [Career+Experience HUB](#), and (3) the Advising Center. This fall we also will open a new Interfaith Center between the Athletic Campus and the Redstone Campus. I encourage all of you to pay a visit to these new spaces and learn more about the important services and opportunities we are providing to our students.

Finally, we continue to make progress in our work to reduce the prevalence and impacts of high-risk drinking, as well as increase understanding of the negative impacts of the use of cannabis on cognition, academic engagement, and success in college. These are sometimes difficult conversations to have with students, but through carefully developed engagement programs and the great work by so many faculty, staff, and student services professionals on our campus, we are making progress. We have seen an 11-point drop in high-risk drinking on the campus in the last four years. And last April, more students participated in the 5K run sponsored by the Wellness Environment than participated in 4/20 activities on the Redstone quad. We also find parents increasingly willing to become involved in these conversations with their students.

As part of our efforts to broaden awareness and increase understanding of the negative effects of cannabis use on student engagement, learning, and success, the *President's Committee on Alcohol, Cannabis, and Other Drugs* will be hosting a series of campus discussions with Dr. Amelia Arria (a psychologist from the University of Maryland's School of Public Health) on October 13. I hope many of our faculty and staff will choose to attend one of Dr. Arria's presentations next month.

GLOBAL EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES

Our campus remains committed to global engagement, so essential today for providing our students the first-hand experience and tools for success in the diverse world in which we live and work. Alongside our semester-long study abroad program in Oaxaca, Mexico, we continue to expand our array of student exchange opportunities, with five new partner universities added during the past academic year and an additional five projected for this year. Together with a rich array of faculty-led travel-study programs, these initiatives expand opportunities for our students to acquire meaningful, high-impact, and cost-effective study abroad experience as part of their UVM education, while enriching the global diversity of our own campus through student exchange. Additional initiatives are under development in our colleges and schools to promote study abroad opportunities linked to specific majors and student cohorts. Information on our exchange programs and the full array of UVM study-abroad opportunities is available at the [UVM Office of International Education](#).

UVM's undergraduate student body is nearly 5% international, up from 0.5% less than a decade ago. We are making excellent progress toward our goal of 7-8% international students in our undergraduate student body. While a key engine for this growth has been UVM's [Global Gateway Program](#), whose first cohort of students is now entering its senior year, our cadre of direct-entry international students continues to increase as well. In all, UVM now welcomes students from more than 70 countries each year.

Among our newest initiatives in this area, the Graduate College and the College of Engineering and Mathematical Sciences have welcomed this fall the first cohort of students in UVM's new [Pre-Master's Program](#), open to international applicants in select graduate-level STEM fields. Based on the success of this pilot program, we may expand it to other fields and other colleges/schools. Please direct any questions or expressions of interest to Dr. Gayle Nunley, Director of Global Educational Initiatives.

I hope you will join me in welcoming our international students and the diversity of perspectives and experience they bring to our campus.

INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP ECOSYSTEM, AND AN INVITATION

UVM's *Innovation and Entrepreneurship Ecosystem*, a partnership with Burlington, continues to grow and to receive national attention. This year, we have added two new and exciting elements to the ecosystem, an *entrepreneurship forum* and an *innovation space*. The entrepreneurship forum was established in response to growing interest from students, faculty, staff, alumni, and members of the community. The goals of the new [Entrepreneurship Forum](#) are:

1. To capitalize on and enhance existing student interest in entrepreneurship using both formal teaching and informal discussions and workshops;
2. To provide and coordinate a range of resources, services, and expertise to support and empower entrepreneurs; and
3. To leverage the talent, energy, and diversity of the UVM student body, faculty and staff to enable sustained multi-directional interactions between alumni, businesses, and entrepreneurial communities in Vermont and beyond.

On October 17, the Entrepreneurship Forum and the Office of the Vice President for Research will host the kick-off event to Burlington's first [Innovation Week](#) in the Davis Center. This event is free and open to the public.

Also new this year is the opening of UVM's first *Innovation Space*, a purpose-renovated space in the Hills Building that will serve as a "proof-of-concept" pilot for a larger space (or additional spaces) to be created in the next 1-2 years. This new space can be scheduled by faculty for innovation-themed classes, entrepreneur-themed clubs and student organizations, faculty and mentors participating in the SPARK-VT competition, seminars and workshops offered by [UVM Innovations](#) (Office of Technology and Commercialization), and others on a space-available basis. It is envisioned as a 24/7 space and has already attracted considerable interest from student groups, faculty, and the local business community. This first innovation space, designed by faculty, staff, and students, comes online later this month (September 2016).

Finally, I want to draw your attention to a very exciting [lecture](#), open to the public, coming up later this month. On September 26 at noon at the Davis Center, Nicholas Donofrio, former Executive Vice President of Innovation and Technology at IBM, will deliver a lecture entitled "Beyond Politics: It's Time to Build Vermont's Innovation Economy." Mr. Donofrio was formerly general manager of IBM's plant in Essex, during which time he resided in Vermont, and maintains close ties with the state. In 2002-03, he led the efforts of the Council on Competitiveness around their National Innovation Initiative (NII), which went on to become the *America Competes Act*. In 2005, the U.S. Department of Education appointed him to the Commission on the Future of Higher Education, a 20-member delegation of business and university leaders charged with developing a national strategy for post-secondary education to meet the needs of America's diverse population and workforce. In 2011-12, he chaired a special committee tasked by Governor Peter Shumlin to evaluate the relationship between the State of Vermont and the University of Vermont. That report, which came to be known as the Donofrio

Report, offered specific suggestions for how Vermont could support and leverage its public research university to stimulate innovation, create jobs, and drive economic development in the state.

Mr. Donofrio's "Beyond Politics" lecture comes at an important time for our state, election season, and complements the other timely and exciting offerings throughout the University including the fantastic slate of four courses offered this fall by our Political Science Department (POLS 095, *The 2016 Election*; POLS 125, *Political Parties*; POLS 195, *Electing the President*; and POLS 229, *Leadership Selection and Institutional Change*). In addition, the Political Science Department will host a panel discussion, *The 2016 Election in Perspective*, with two distinguished political journalists, Adam Clymer (New York Times) and Jon Margolis (Chicago Tribune), October 17, 3:30-5:00PM in Billings North Lounge.

UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT UPDATE

The overall goal of the University's work in assessment is to create a robust and sustainable system for assessing whether students are achieving the learning outcomes determined by the faculty to be essential to a UVM education. Assessment is a critical part of the continuous cycle of gathering information on how students are performing, and using that information to improve students' achievement of outcomes through curricular and pedagogical changes. In other words, assessment tells us what we need to work on to improve our academic programs and general education requirements. This important work, and cycle of continuous improvement, helps us meet the new standards for our regional accrediting body, the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC).

Under the direction of Associate Provost for Teaching and Learning, Dr. Brian Reed, the University is preparing for our 2019 NEASC re-accreditation review. Working closely with Dr. Reed is the Faculty Fellow for Assessment, Dr. J. Dickinson. Brian and J. are working directly with assessment coordinators in each academic unit as well as our three Gen Ed assessment chairs. All department chairs and program directors also have been engaged directly. Finally, deans and their staffs are working to coordinate assessment activities within their college or school.

Obviously, we share a common anticipation that the University will be re-accredited; however, this requires that all faculty participate fully in assessment efforts within their respective programs. Just as enrollment management is everyone's business, so too is assessment. Our success in earning re-accreditation, and more importantly as a university committed to academic excellence, depends on assessment being part of UVM's culture of continuous improvement and our commitment to student success. To learn more about UVM's assessment activities – ongoing and planned – please visit the [assessment website](#).

CAPITAL PROJECTS

The campus continues to buzz with construction activity, something the civil engineer in me loves to see. No doubt each of you has experienced some wonder as you watch the buildings progress and some of the inconveniences that are inevitable with such construction projects. The

[Building UVM](#) website is still the best way to stay up-to-date on construction activities, plans and any campus interruptions.

Work continues apace and all of the ongoing capital projects are on-schedule and on-budget. The Alumni House and the neighboring Silver Pavilion are scheduled to open in the coming weeks. The first-year residence hall and the first STEM Complex building (“Innovation”) are on-schedule to open next August, after which the demolition of the Cook Building will commence. The second STEM Complex building (“Discovery”) is scheduled to be completed in summer 2019. Renovations to Votey Hall are continuing on-schedule, and work will continue throughout Votey over the next two years as well. Work will begin this year on extensive renovations to Billings Library which, when completed, will house Special Collections and several humanities-themed centers. Renovations are underway for the new Interfaith Center, scheduled to open later this fall. Finally, work has commenced on the Taft School which, when completed, will provide new studio, instructional, and gallery space for the arts.

You may also have noticed construction has started on the new patient bed-tower at the UVM Medical Center, adjacent to our campus. Taken together, the STEM Complex, the first-year residence hall, and the patient bed-tower will redefine and revitalize the space between Bailey/Howe Library and the Fleming Museum, making it one of the most visible and traveled quads on the campus.

NEW LEADERSHIP APPOINTMENTS

This summer we were pleased to announce three leadership appointments on the campus. [Dr. Scott Thomas](#) joined UVM as the new dean of the College of Education and Social Services. Scott has an impressive record as a scholar in higher education and brings considerable university and professional leadership experience to his role as CESS Dean. Also joining us this summer was [Dr. Alexander Yin](#), appointed Director of the Office of Institutional Research. Alex joins UVM from Penn State University where he served in a similar role for the broader Penn State System. Originally from New Hampshire, and eager to work for a single flagship university, Alex is very excited to be joining us at UVM. Finally, Amanda Waite was promoted this summer to the new position of Creative Communications Director. In this role, Amanda will serve as the creative director for the University, working closely with the 160/90 team, the Division of Enrollment Management, University Communications, and the communications specialists in each of the units on campus. Amanda will also work closely with the UVM Foundation, UVM Athletics, and the UVM Medical Center.

CLOSING COMMENTS

We continue to witness amazing changes at the University of Vermont. But we must not be idle witnesses, we must be actively engaged and personally committed. This really is an exciting time for UVM, for our campus, and for our academic community. As I start my fourth year as provost, I am heartened by the support of so many on our campus and the sense of shared optimism that we have built together. I thank you for your willingness to examine critically and think strategically – about where we have been, where we are, and where we want to go as a

university. These conversations are not always easy, nor are they always comfortable, but they are critically important. And we will continue to engage in conversations, easy and hard, with respect for one another and for this great institution. For all of us stand on the shoulders of those who came before us (we are, after all, a 225-year old university) and ours are the shoulders that future generations of UVM faculty, staff, and students will stand upon. We are part of an important university's amazing history, proud legacy, exciting future, and fantastic journey.

Part of our commitment to one another and to the values that have shaped our university is how we engage with people with differing viewpoints from our own. UVM is a university committed to civil discourse, to inclusiveness of viewpoints, and to diversity of ideas. Differing ideas and civil discourse are cornerstones of the American higher education system, and they underpin reflective inquiry, substantive debate, and deep learning. We must continue to not only tolerate differing viewpoints, but foster them. We must not only be open to new ideas, we must invite them.

I suggested one bold idea in my [essay](#) on this year's first-year reading selection, *The Sixth Extinction*. For those who have not read the essay, my challenge to faculty and students is reproduced here:

"My thinking continued to evolve as we contemplated and launched university-wide general education requirements; as we invested in people, facilities and programs in the critical STEM fields that underpin both our understanding of climate change and the technologies that are critical to solutions; and as we worked together over the last three years to envision and enliven a university-wide Institute for Environment, expected to launch this fall. But it was reading this book that caused me to ask this bold question: What if we were the first major university to require *all* of our undergraduate students to have a minor or certificate in Climate? Why not? After all, professionals in every discipline will be required to come together to address the complex issues around climate change, and all of us will live in a world impacted by these changes. And why not UVM? We have nationally recognized faculty and programs in the environment and natural resources, climate studies, energy, water, complex systems, global and population health, policy, sustainability, food systems and agriculture, political science, and more.

"My hope is that the faculty will take this challenge up in their departments, schools, and colleges, bringing a proposal forward to the Faculty Senate for its consideration. This is the right time and, I believe, the right place to contemplate a university-wide certificate or minor, built around elective slates of courses decided upon by the faculty, in Climate. This idea is bold – as some call it, a BHAG (big, hairy, audacious goal) – but it is not far-fetched. Nor is it out-of-reach. We have the courses and the experts. We have the students with the interest and passion. We need only the will to make this happen. Such a requirement can be a discriminator for UVM and can fortify our position as a national leader among major universities.

"In the meantime, as the faculty contemplate whether and how best to advance such a requirement, I am asking our newest students – members of the Class of 2020 – to take it upon yourselves to select courses that will prepare you as broad and curious thinkers, engaged and informed partners, innovators, and leaders, ready to address the myriad challenges we face resulting from our changing climate. Build your own certificate or minor. Use your electives wisely and with purpose. Look at course offerings across departments, speak with faculty about those courses, and ask their advice in putting together smart slates of courses. Remember those

intertwining strands I mentioned earlier. Make our faculty your partners. They are exceptional teacher-scholars, highly respected in their fields, and they want to help you make the most of your four years at the University of Vermont. You can be the first UVM class in which *all* students take courses in Climate. Go be that class, the great Class of 2020.”

I look forward to watching our students and faculty contemplate and perhaps take up this challenge. In the meantime, I hope you make time this fall to get out and enjoy our beautiful campus, engage with our students and with one another, celebrate all that is happening at UVM, and reflect on the great privilege we enjoy of working at a great university. Enjoy the colors on our campus, and those splashed across our beautiful mountains, with (UVM)2020 vision. And by all means, enjoy some apples.

“Few universities can boast a stronger, more authentic commitment to the Teacher-Scholar model than UVM. This is something that we cherish, nurture, and celebrate every day.”

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